

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 SAJ-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SAM-01 /072 W
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O 301445Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5772

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 19137

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR

SUBJ: POSTPONEMENT OF BREZHNEV'S ME TRIP

1. TASS ENGLISH WIRE DECEMBER 30 ANNOUNCES THAT BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO EGYPT, SYRIA AND IRAG HAS BEEN POSTPONED BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. CBS MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT TOLD US EARLIER DECEMBER 30 THAT LOCAL AL AHAM CORRESPONDENT WAS REPORTING THAT BREZHNEV VISIT TO CAIRO WOULD BE POSTPONED. MOSCOW AL AHAM REPORTER HAS PRIVATELY ATTRIBUTED THE POSTPONEMENT TO BREZHNEV'S HEALTH, BUT OTHER SPECULATION HERE EMPHASIZES POLICY DIFFERENCES.

2. ABSENCE OF ANY REFERENCE TO BREZHNEV'S ME
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TOUR IN TASS REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH FAHMY AND

GAMASY (PRAVDA DECEMBER 30) AND IN EARLIER REPORT OF EGYPTIANS' TALKS WITH GROMYKO AND GRECHKO (PRAVDA DECEMBER 29) LENT WIEGHT TO REPORTS THAT BREZHNEV'S TRIP MIGHT BE OFF. OMISSION OF REFERENCE TO BREZHNEV'S TOUR IN THE ABOVE CONTEXTS WOULD HAVE BEEN MOST UNUSUAL IF IT IN FACT HAD BEEN STILL ON.

3. INDIRECT EVIDENCE HERE SUPPORTS REPORTS FROM CAIRO THAT THE FAHMY VISIT WAS A HASTILY ARRANGED AFFAIR. SEVERAL KEY MEMBERS OF THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY STAFF WERE ON SCHEDULED HOLIDAY LEAVE OUTSIDE MOSCOW DECEMBER 23-26. ON SOVIET SIDE, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MFA NEAR EAST COUNTRIES DIVISION PYRILIN AS LATE AS MONDAY EVENING DECEMBER 23 GAVE NO HINT THAT BREZHNEV'S TRIP WAS IN DOUBT. HE TOLD EMBOFF INSTEAD THAT SOVIET PRESS ADVANCE FOR THE TOUR HAD LEFT MOSCOW FOR CAIRO, DAMASCUS AND BAGHDAD MORNING OF DECEMBER 23. STOESEL

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